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FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6547
INFO RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0178
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 1956
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 0094
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0389
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 0851
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 0085
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 0867
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0273
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 2107

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/1/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)
SUBJECT: NEW FRONTIER GOVERNOR TO BE NAMED

REF: PESHAWAR 59

CLASSIFIED BY: Gautam Rana, Political Officer, U.S. Consulate ,
Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) In the shadow of President Bush's imminent arrival, GOP sources have leaked President Musharraf's decision to replace Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) Governor Khalil ur-Rehman in the next few days, according to local press reports. Rumors regarding Rehman's departure have been rampant for several weeks, chiefly due to his failure to drive forward economic and political development in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), to reinvigorate the PML-Q party in the NWFP, and to shake off corruption allegations in his FATA Secretariat (REF). Five candidates appear to be leading the pack to replace Rehman: retired General Ali Muhammad Jan Orakzai, Humayun Khan Bangash, Gohar Ayub Khan, Azam Khan, and Imtiaz Sahibzada.

¶2. (C) Post sources tell us Orakzai is the leading candidate. Orakzai, a Pashtun from the FATA, was retired from the 11th Corps command in 2004 to make way for the more aggressive Lt. General Safdar Hussain.. In return for his premature retirement, Orakzai was reportedly offered the governorship but declined it at that time. Other leading candidates are:

--Gohar Ayub Khan: a Foreign Minister under PM Nawaz Sharif and the son of President Ayub Khan, he enjoys the backing of PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat.

-Humayun Khan Bangash, the Inspector General of the Frontier Corps from 1990-1991.

-- Azam Khan and Imtiaz Sahibzada are former Chief Secretaries, the highest-ranking civil servants, in the NWFP.

¶3. (C) Comment: We believe these press reports stem from credible GOP sources. The tussle to succeed Rehman is likely to pit the politician Gohar Ayub, against retired General Orakzai. Most observers here are betting that Orakzai's military background, personal relationship with Musharraf and prior FATA experience gives him the advantage. Removing Rehman now helps to demonstrate the GOP's high-profile commitment to re-energize the GOP's three-legged CT strategy in the FATA (political negotiations, economic development, and military offensives). Rehman is apparently embittered, after leaving his Senate Deputy Chairmanship less than a year ago and now too late to stand for

re-Senate election. He was fairly cast as "a Nero who fiddled
while FATA burned." End comment.

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